



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF: Executive Member for Children's Services
LEAD OFFICER: Director of Children's Services
DATE: 8 December 2016

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Children's Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: YES NO

SUBJECT: Adoption Service Six Monthly Report – 1 April 2016 – 30 September 2016

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide information on the management and performance of the Local Authority's Adoption Service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:
Notes this six monthly report which is available in the new format in Political Group Rooms and on the Council website.

3. BACKGROUND

Standard 25.6 of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption requires the Local Authority Adoption Agency to produce a six monthly report to be received by the Council's Executive.

The standard states that the Council's Executive:

- a. Receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency every 6 months;
- b. Monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users;
- c. Satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.

The report has been written to address the issues identified above, and it will be taken into account by OFSTED when inspecting the Service.

The report summarises the performance of the Adoption Service for the six month period from 1st April 2016 to 30th September 2016 and provides an overview of the work of the Service for this period.

4. KEY ISSUES

1. The development of the Regional Adoption Agency has progressed more slowly than previously expected whilst awaiting further assurances and information regarding funding which has been received In October 2016. Meanwhile workshops to further develop collaborative working have taken place.
2. The number of children being made subject to Placement Orders is still low; however they include a large percentage of children who it is generally considered are harder to place. It is therefore very positive that the timescales for matching are showing improvement due to the family finding strategies that are in place.
3. There were twelve adopters awaiting the placement of children at the end of September 2016, a reduction of 8 from the beginning of the year. This is as a result of significant success in matching Blackburn with Darwen adopters with children. In addition, the number of adopters being approved in the first half of this year was very low, in line with the experience of other agencies in the region. Whilst child numbers remain low, the level of recruitment is broadly in keeping, however it is anticipated that following a rise in the number of Looked After Children both locally and nationally this will eventually result in an increase in the number of children requiring adoptive families.
4. Post Adoption Support remains a busy area with an increase in open cases from 42 at the beginning of the financial year to 60 at the end of this six month period. The Fast Track Psychologist has changed roles at the end of this period but will remain involved in a few ongoing Fast Track and Post Adoption cases to complete courses of therapy.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

No policy implications identified.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is required to meet statutory requirements as set out in the 'National Minimum Standards for Adoption.'

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

No resource implications identified.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

10. CONSULTATIONS

None.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	V2.0
-----------------	-------------

CONTACT OFFICER:	Alyson Hanson – Service Leader, Placement Services
-------------------------	--

DATE:	1 November 2016
--------------	-----------------

BACKGROUND PAPER:	Adoption Service Six Monthly Report – 1 April 2016 – 30 September 2016
--------------------------	--

